



UNITED STATES ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY  
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20460

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THE ADMINISTRATOR

**MEMORANDUM**

**TO:** Assistant Administrators  
General Counsel  
Inspector General  
Deputy Chief Financial Officer  
Associate Administrators  
Regional Administrators

On many occasions over the past months you have heard me outline my goals for the Agency, to make our air cleaner, our water purer, and our land better protected. These are the results that we, together with our state and tribal partners, are working hard to achieve, and our progress toward these goals will be the measure of our success.

Of course, to know whether we are in fact making progress toward these goals, we need high quality information about the state of the environment. Therefore, I have asked the Office of Environmental Information in partnership with the Office of Research and Development to lead an agency-wide "Environmental Indicators Initiative" to gather and develop the information that will help us understand where we are and where we need to go in order to make sound, strategic decisions. I am pleased to announce that the President's Council on Environmental Quality (CEQ) has agreed to convene a federal interagency work group to support our indicators effort by inventorying and evaluating current indicators work across federal agencies. This effort will contribute significantly to EPA's ability to report health and environment conditions beyond the purview of our Agency.

It is also important that we hold ourselves accountable to the American public and report to them our progress in reaching the goals we have set for ourselves. Therefore, I am directing the Agency to prepare a State of the Environment Report, which will bring together national, regional and program office indicator efforts to describe the condition of critical environmental areas and human health concerns. To perfect this report will be a multi-year process, but I believe it is important to begin the process now, and commit to continuous improvement over time. The first Report, due in Fall 2002 will provide an inventory of EPA indicators, identify promising indicators that allow us to report on the environment, as well as identify data gaps and discuss the challenges we face in filling these gaps.

The indicators work and the State of the Environment report are critical steps in our more comprehensive approach to identifying priorities, focusing resources on areas of greatest concern, and managing our work to achieve measurable results. Concurrently, to ensure that our

management processes are as effective as they can be, the Office of the Chief Financial Officer is leading a Managing For Improved Results Initiative that will examine a number of our current management practices, including priority-setting, planning and budgeting, performance tracking, measuring and reporting.

In the future, all of these efforts must converge into a single management system. Therefore, I am asking the Office of Environmental Information to develop a proposal by March, 2002 for an integrated, agency-wide information system for reporting key measurements, both activities and outcome measures, that reflect our progress in reporting about the environment. This system should better inform the Agency's policy and regulatory decision-making, provide more accurate and timely information, and easier public access.

These new initiatives will be guided by two agency-wide advisory groups, comprising senior leaders from several regional and national program offices. OCFO has already assembled a Steering Group, working with Deputy Administrator Linda Fisher, to support its work on improved results. I am asking Chief of Staff Eileen McGinnis to use the same Steering Group, adding other members as necessary, to guide the Agency's Environmental Indicators Initiative and oversee development of the State of the Environment Report.

I am fully committed to these efforts and will be working closely with the Steering Group to identify and implement improvements. However, this important work is not for managers alone. If we are to be successful, it is important that all EPA employees see how their work contributes, directly and indirectly, to the achievement of environmental results. I urge you to share information on these two new efforts with your staffs and solicit their ideas and feedback. Thank you for your support of these efforts, and I look forward to working together to achieve improved results.



Christine Todd Whitman

cc: Linda Fisher  
Eileen McGinnis  
Kim Nelson  
Paul Gilman  
John Howard (CEQ)